



# MDA Agriculture and Seafood Marketing *Rural Summit*

Mark Powell  
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# Marketing mission



- The goal of the Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Marketing Program is to develop markets for Maryland agricultural products and to connect farmers, watermen, and food producers to those markets.
- Through this economic development and promotion activity, the department helps create a profitable, sustainable and viable future for Maryland's rural economy.

# Key strategies



- Promote agriculture and seafood
- Promote local food
- Maintain website listing farmers and seafood operations, **[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)**
- Develop and distribute lists of farmers to wholesale and retail buyers
- Develop advertising and promotional events targeting consumers and wholesale buyers
- Work with Communications office for press releases, social media
- Develop and maintain working relationships with buyers and producers to act as ombudsman for marketing issues

# Maryland's Best



## Maryland's Best is 20 years old!

- Advertising reaches 4 million annually through billboards, radio, print, social media. Spend is approximately \$80,000-\$100,000
- Content for promos ... videos, photos, recipes
- Support MPT's Farm&Harvest. MDA is co-producer. Farm&Harvest is MPT's top program.
- Signage for farm stands, farmers markets

# Maryland's Best



- In the last 7 years, Seafood Marketing program now is Maryland's Best. Also, Homegrown by Heroes is now a Maryland's Best program.
- Maryland's Best started in 2021. New state ag logo, replacing Maryland With Pride.

# Ice Cream Trail



Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail, more than 70 people completed the trail in 2019. 33 completed in 2021.

'The gift that keeps giving'

# Maryland's Best website

Web site reached 146,000 in 2021. 182,000 during 2020 'COVID effect'



# Buyer Grower Expo



Maryland's Best Expo brings hundreds of farmers, seafood companies, niche food producers to meet with buyers. Jan. 19, 2022. Will be our 18<sup>th</sup> Expo.

# Other Marketing programs

- Farmers Market Nutrition Program ... More than \$530,000 in food benefits to WIC recipients and seniors with limited income.
- International Marketing ... Sales of \$42 million from Maryland ag companies in 2019.
- Specialty crop block grant program, \$400,000 in grants
- Wine and Grape Promotion Fund, \$160,000 checkoff dollars to support industry
- Farms and Families Fund, \$100,000 for matching dollars programs at farmers markets
- Ag tourism signing program
- Food donation tax credit program
- Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program
- Ag Mediation
- Farm to School program
- Spay and Neuter program
- NEW .. Urban Agriculture Grant Program





MDA Marketing 2004

## Contact us at ...



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